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FOR CA/VO JUNE KUNSMAN AND CA/VO/L/C

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/28/2018
TAGS: [CVIS](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [SA](#)
SUBJECT: MISSION REQUEST TO REVIEW JAFAR AL-SHAYEB,S VISA INELIGIBILITY

Classified By: CDA Michael Gfoeller for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (U) This is an action message. It has been cleared by State, GRPO, and DHS.

¶2. (S/NF) Summary. On April 24, 2007, CA/VO determined that Jafar Mohammed al-Shayeb (DOB: 10 Jan 1959, Saudi Arabia) was inadmissible under INA Section 212(a)(3)(B) based on information contained in TD 314/29893-05 released on 20 May 2005. The U.S. Mission in Saudi Arabia recommends a review of decision since much of the information on which this decision was based appears to be erroneous. GRPO, DHS, and State Department political officers are unaware of any information supporting the idea that al-Shayeb belongs to a terrorist organization or supports terrorist activities. End Summary.

¶3. (SBU) Jafar al-Shayeb is one of Saudi Arabia's best known democracy and human rights activists. In July 2007, he was selected, along with nineteen other Arab human rights activists, to meet with President Bush in Prague. He is generally regarded as the No. 2 man in Saudi Arabia's "Shirazi" movement, a group which King Fahd "blessed" as the leadership of the Saudi Shi'a community in the mid-1990s. He also served until recently as the elected Chairman of Qateef's Municipal Council. Al-Shayeb has worked actively with the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) on regional democracy initiatives. Due to the finding of his inadmissibility, he was unable to attend an NDI-sponsored conference in the United States, take a summer fellowship at Stanford University, and the State Department's Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) had to abandon plans to invite him to participate in one of their reform projects.

¶4. (S/NF) Jafar's inadmissibility appears to be based on a single sentence in TD 314/29893-05, a raw intelligence report which correctly identified al-Shayeb as a Shirazi and in which a source made the allegation that, "This ("being a Shirazi") was, for all intents and purposes, the same thing as Hizballah. The Shirazi movement predated Hizballah but it evolved and folded itself into the Hizballah organization and movement. The term, Shirazi, therefore, had come to identify a group and generation (or clique) of leaders who were part of that movement before Hizballah came into prominence. These leaders were, however, part of Hizballah and received their direction and support from Hizballah."

¶5. (S/NF) The allegation that the Shirazi movement and Hizballah have "merged" and are "the same thing" is not corroborated by intelligence reporting, political reporting, or independent academic research conducted on these Saudi political movements for the past twenty years. In fact, independent academics and the bulk of all reporting suggest precisely the opposite--that the Shirazis and Hizballahis are rivals and that the Shirazis are the

main political opponents of Hizballah in the Saudi Shi'a community.

¶6. (S/NF) The Mission is aware of no evidence that al-Shayeb is a member of Hizballah or receives direction or support from them. All of the information available to us suggests that he is a non-violent political moderate and an active opponent of Hizballah. GRPO has done a detailed search of Jafar al-Shayeb in their databases and has turned up no/no information that he is a terrorist or supports terrorism. GRPO has so advised the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) which has agreed to remove their "hits" on al-Shayeb from their system.

¶7. (S/NF) All information